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THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE.

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IN spite of opposition in Congress, sometimes frankly emphatic and at all times sufficiently effective, sentiment favorable to the reorganization of the United States Consular Service has grown substantially within the last decade and found widespread, though spasmodic and unsystematic, expression. To-day, every Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce and other commercial and industrial association directly or remotely interested in the growth of the foreign commerce of the United States is demanding the improvement and the strengthening of our Consular Service. For nearly half a century, there has been persistent lack of legislation looking to the systematic development and increased usefulness of that Service.

During these long years of neglect, the whole scheme of international commerce and interoceanic communication has been transformed. Portions of the laws of the United States relative to the Consular Service have been made obsolete by the advent of rapid communication afforded by steam-railways, steamships and ocean cables. Consulates in various parts of the world, which thirty-five or forty years ago were of salient importance, have, owing to the decadence of our merchant marine, ceased to be places worth considering; while many other posts, which either did not exist, or were of scant consequence, have, by reason of changed conditions, or variations in the current of international trade, assumed great importance, and now require for their proper administration a high order of ability and liberal maintenance.

I.

The Consular Service has been one of the most notable of governmental derelicts. It is understood in commercial circles, and has been for a considerable time, that our Consular Service is not all it ought to be, and many well-meant suggestions have been communicated to the Department of State, some of which may ultimately be embodied in a definite and systematic plan of reform. Almost every one is aware of the obvious defects in our Consular system, but very few persons seem to know how difficult it is to correct obvious and admitted evils, when their eradication means the destruction of an existing system and the substitution of something substantially new in its stead.

It must not be supposed that the Consular system as now organized is wholly inadequate, or that it is not responsive in a considerable degree to the growing needs and opportunities of this country in the markets of the world. Those who have had occasion to study at first hand, and from the vantage-point of official station, the operation of our Consular system during the last twelve or fourteen years find a steady and encouraging improvement in the character and ability of the personnel, and in the quality of the work performed.

Mr. Blaine made an earnest endeavor to secure the appointment of well-equipped men to the Consular Corps, and Mr. Cleveland rendered a conspicuous service when he issued his order providing that applicants for Consular positions, the compensations of which are not less than one thousand dollars nor more than twenty-five hundred dollars a year, should be examined as to their fitness. Persons already in the service, those who had been in it or who were in the service of the Department of State in Washington, were exempted from these examinations. Within a few weeks, President Roosevelt has extended the scope of Mr. Cleveland's order, and now all candidates for appointment to a Consular position, the annual compensation of which exceeds one thousand dollars, must submit to examination.

It is the purpose of Secretary Root to make the examinations more searching, and to alter the system of marking in order distinctly to add to its effectiveness. No considerable change in the character or scope of the examination is contemplated. These examinations are designed to be practical tests of fitness. When a candidate for appointment has been designated for

examination by the President, he is furnished with a volume of the Consular Regulations; and, after he has had ample time to study them, he is required to answer a number of sensible questions respecting the official duties of Consular officers. The applicant is also required to know something of Geography, Commercial History, and to have information concerning the business character of the post for which he has been designated. He is expected, also, to have some knowledge of his own Government, and to be able to explain the functions and workings of its various branches.

Eventually, candidates for appointment to the Consular Service will be required to speak at least one foreign language. If the service is put upon a permanent basis and men enter it with the expectation of making it a career, they ought in the beginning to know Spanish and French. The candidate's personal appearance and address and his manner of speech are also considered in making up the estimate of his fitness; and, if the examinations served no other good purpose, they would afford opportunity to see the applicant and enable one to judge by personal observation what sort of an official he would be likely to make. It has sometimes happened that Consuls have been appointed and gone to their posts without calling upon the President, the Secretary of State or any of the latter's assistants. Indeed, a few Consuls were never seen by any one in authority until they had returned to this country from their posts, and I have heard Presidents state with unmistakable emphasis that, had they seen such and such a Consul prior to his appointment, he would never have been commissioned.

II.

President Roosevelt's important order of November 10th also applies to one branch of the Diplomatic Service. Henceforth, candidates for appointment as Secretary of Embassy or of Legation will be required to pass a special Departmental examination. Neither this examination nor the one required of applicants for appointment to the Consular Service is competitive. Candidates who wish to enter the Diplomatic Service in the capacity of Secretary of Embassy or of Legation will be required to speak one foreign language. That is, it will be expected of them to know either French or the language of the country to which they

are likely to be sent. In addition to this, they will be examined in the elements of international law and in diplomatic usage.

The result of the examination of the candidates for Consular appointments has been excellent. As I have said, the standard of ability and the character of the personnel have been raised. A considerable number of applicants have been rejected, and those who have passed with credit, when commissioned, have gone to their posts with a much more definite knowledge of the work expected of them than was often the case in the days before Mr. Cleveland's order was issued. These fine results will be strongly augmented by the President's recent extension of that order.

During President Roosevelt's incumbency, the Consular Service has been severely and systematically purged. Great care has been exercised, so far as the appointing power is concerned, in the selection of new officials. Not only has the President dismissed dishonest men wherever he has found them, but he has removed a number of men who, as he graphically phrases it, were "simply marking time"—officials who were incompetent, careless about their duties and responsibilities, or indifferent to them. Every vacancy that has occurred since Mr. Roosevelt became President has been filled, so far as was practicable, by promoting deserving men already in the Service, and such promotions have been made, generally speaking, without reference to politics or political influence. Not half a dozen removals solely for political reasons have been made in the Consular Service within the last four years. The first consideration with the President and Department of State is the man's merit, his worth and his fitness for the particular vacancy for which he is being considered. Mr. Hay, by reason of his ripe experience and his wide acquaintance abroad and in this country, was able to improve the personnel of the Service, and he was particularly felicitous in putting "the right man in the right place."

No man fought more persistently and valiantly to lift the Consular Service from the plane of partisan politics than Mr. Hay, and no man accomplished more in this field of patriotic endeavor than did he. His successor, Mr. Root, with all the strength of his keen and luminous mind, has taken up the work at the advanced point where Mr. Hay laid it down, and already his influence has made itself felt to the great advantage of the whole American foreign service.

III.

The Consular Service of the United States is not without great respectability and merit. The unusual responsibility thrown upon our Consular officers, many of whom were quite inexperienced men, during the war with Spain, and which was met in a manful and efficient way proved this. The American Consuls rendered valuable service to the military and naval arms of the Government during the period of hostilities; so much so, indeed, that the late President McKinley, who had appointed the great majority of them, was deeply gratified at their manifestation of resourcefulness and patriotism. The grievous faults of our Consular Service are faults of the system rather than of the men who fill the posts under it.

Few specific and well-grounded charges of incompetency or of ill-doing on the part of Consular officers are filed with the Department of State. Every complaint that seems to have a reasonable degree of substance is promptly considered, but the Department's means for investigation are often inadequate, in that we have no Inspectors, who can be called upon to investigate remote Consuls and make a report respecting the conduct of the official and his office. Recently, the Department of State has been compelled to have a naval vessel from Manila go to a Consulate in one of the Pacific Islands to investigate a Consular officer. The case was urgent, and fortunately there was a vessel in commission which was free for a short period and could make the desired journey. The Department of State has been much assisted in its surveillance of the Consular Corps by the reports of Naval officers, whose observations are generally both just and informing.

But one of the most vital and immediate needs of the Consular Service is adequate provision for regular and thorough inspection. The Secretary of State feels the urgency of this demand and has asked Congress to make an appropriation for the payment of salaries to five Inspectors, who are to be called Consuls-General at large. It would be entirely useless, however, to appoint Inspectors, unless they can be liberally paid. It will be of no advantage to the Government to send out men of mediocre talent and slender equipment for this duty. Inspectors should be men of uncommon intelligence and of wide experience in Consular or Treasury Customs work. Congress cannot afford

to employ cheap men for this service. It would be quite as well to make no appropriation unless the appropriation can be made upon a liberal and enlightened basis. The work will be arduous, responsible, and always important. The men who perform it ought to be men who reach a mental and moral standard equal to that expected of United States District and Circuit Judges. They ought to be as well paid as any official in the Consular Service. If Congress does nothing else for the improvement and uplifting of the Consular Service this session, it ought, at least, to comply with the recommendation of the Secretary of State for an appropriation that will enable him to secure the appointment of the kind of inspectors he desires. It goes without saying that these appointments should be left unreservedly to the discretion of the President and the Secretary of State, and that no political or other extraneous influence should be brought to bear in connection with them.

It is to be regretted that it is still the practice of some writers and speakers, as well as of some travellers and business men, to make sweeping denunciations of the Consular Service. We still hear it loosely asserted that "American Consuls are ignorant, often drunken, and not infrequently dishonest, that they no sooner learn their duties than they are straightway dismissed to make room for political heelers." This may fairly be said to be the gist and style of the current and careless criticism of our Consular Service. Most of the people who indulge in this violent and indiscriminate denunciation are ill informed regarding our service, or else they are mere lovers of sensation who have a fancy for making shocking statements. When people of this class attack the Consular Service in an unrestrained way they are not only guilty of bad taste, but also deficient in patriotism.

I once read a letter, written in solemn vein, to the editor of a New York newspaper, by an American woman who had recently returned from Europe, and who, while there, thought that she had not been quite well treated by one of our Consuls, who held a fifteen-hundred-dollar post in a small, unattractive and insalubrious city. She complained bitterly of the Consul, and observed that he was not a polished gentleman, and that he was lacking in *savoir-faire*. She closed her letter with what she deemed a pertinent inquiry: "Why cannot all of our Consular

positions be filled by men of the Sir Julian Pauncefote type?"

This is a sample of a good deal of the criticism and comment concerning the Consular Corps which reaches the Department of State. I am sure no one regrets more keenly than the appointing power at Washington that the visible supply of men of the Sir Julian Pauncefote type is forever greatly exceeded by the demand. It might, also, occur to the lady who made the inquiry referred to that men who are fit to be ambassadors cannot usually be employed for fifteen hundred dollars a year.

Under the present faulty system, some undesirable men get into the Service,—men whose presence abroad is a source of humiliation and discomfort to those of their fellow countrymen who happen to meet them. Such men, I am glad to say, are the exception and not the rule, and it is no secret that it is the earnest desire of the Administration to remove officials of this type whenever proper information concerning them is brought to the attention of the Department of State. The President wants our Consular officers, as well as our Diplomatic officers, to be representative of the best breeding and good feeling of the country, and he thinks that it would be much easier to secure men of this desirable type were Congress to reorganize the Consular establishment and place it upon a more permanent basis.

IV.

To meet the growing demand of the business interests of this country for a steady and systematic enlargement of its export commerce, a properly organized Consular Corps could render services of inestimable value. On account of the difficult and laborious work of authenticating or "legalizing" invoices of goods that are to be exported to the United States, American Consular officers are required to meet responsibilities and conditions more difficult and more varied than are the Consular officers of any other foreign service. It is not overstating the case to say that annually more than \$2,500,000 is added to the revenue of the United States in customs duties, by reason of the watchfulness and conscientious performance of duty on the part of Consular officers, who discover undervaluation in the invoices of goods for exportation to this country, and who by

their alertness and special knowledge cause prices to be advanced and largely increased duties to be collected.

Not only are Consuls expected to have a knowledge of the market values of the foreign products which are likely to come to this country, but each Consul is required to report every opportunity in his district for the extension of the American export trade. He is also expected carefully to observe the industries, the manufacturing and other industrial enterprises in the section of the foreign country in which he lives, and to report concisely and lucidly the important innovations, experiments and inventions which may be of interest or significance to his own countrymen. He is also asked to collect a great deal of statistical information, and to give regular and frequent reports concerning sanitary conditions.

In addition to these duties, if he is at a seaport, he is charged with the protection of American seamen, and incidentally is preyed upon by American tramps of all descriptions, and compelled to make large charitable donations from his own pocket. The Government, in its infinite goodness and mercy, makes no provision whatsoever for the assistance of suffering or stranded Americans abroad other than seamen.

A high degree of usefulness in the Consular Service requires not only experience, but natural aptitude. It requires the trained discernment which recognizes promptly and accurately important events, and, above all, requires industry, together with a patriotic conception of duty which impels an officer to remain faithfully at his post and work. "These are qualities of temperament and character, the presence or absence of which no formal examination, however useful in other respects, can with certainty reveal."

One of the questions most frequently asked by members of that considerable body of men who are working earnestly, and with every promise of success, for the improvement of the Consular Service is, "Who make the best Consuls? From what class of men have our most successful Consuls come?" The question, owing to the fact that there is no formal efficiency record, is difficult to answer. One may throw some light on this phase of the subject, however, by restating what the most experienced Consular officer in the United States Service once wrote to a friend who asked these same questions. The officer

answered by a process of elimination, and pointed out the following persons, who, experience has shown, are least likely to rise to efficiency and usefulness in the Consular Service. They are:

1. Young men who go abroad with the intention of using their Consular position as a convenience while they complete their education, as artists, lawyers, physicians, or architects, by study and attendance at lectures in some neighboring art school, polytechnic institute or university.
2. Aged professional men, who seek Consular appointments to obtain rest from their work as lawyers, clergymen and physicians, for which alone they were qualified by early education and mature experience.
3. Invalids, who choose a special Consulate on account of its benign climate or proximity to a desirable physician, health resort or sanitarium.
4. Men with families who wish to reside abroad for the education of their children.
5. Men who have special business interests in Consular districts to which they ask to be assigned, in order that they may have the support and influence of a Consular position while working for their own profit and interest.
6. Young men of unformed character and dissolute, idle habits, whose families seek to place them in public positions abroad, in order to escape the responsibility and embarrassment of their presence at home.
7. Men who are so confident of having earned Consular preferment by political services that they will treat their four years of residence abroad as the simple discharge of a debt by the United States Government.

It is too often stated, at least interrogatively, that the ideal Consul is to be found in the ranks of our business men. Perhaps this would be true, were we dealing with ideals; but, as a matter of fact, men who possess the requisite qualities to make successful careers in commerce or industry cannot often be spared from these fields of activity. Experienced business men do not find Consulates carrying a compensation of twenty-five hundred dollars a year attractive or satisfactory. The so-called business men who seek Consular positions are as a rule (there are some happy exceptions) men who have met with

little or no success in business, or men who have grown old in one form of commercial activity, and who, as a consequence, are narrow, and perform their duties in a perfunctory and unintelligent manner. Experience shows clearly that business men thrust into the Consular Service without previous knowledge of the work, and after passing middle life, too often make inefficient officers. A man who has spent forty or fifty years buying and selling fish or nails is not necessarily, because he has done this work with profit to himself, just the person to make a desirable Consul-General at Cairo, Havana or Hongkong.

Patient study of our Consular Corps for the last twelve or fourteen years shows that, on the whole, a larger number of successful Consuls have come from the ranks of Journalism than from any other class or vocation. Self-respecting, active newspaper men almost invariably make efficient Consuls. They are trained observers; they know how to describe concisely what they see; and their reports are informing and clear. They are likely to understand the art of getting on pleasantly with foreign officials, and are intelligent, intensely patriotic, have a saving sense of humor, and do not often yield to the temptation of boasting of their own country and its achievements.

The Army and Navy have contributed some excellent officials to the Consular Service, as have all of the learned professions. It is a distinct advantage for a Consul to have had some active experience in professional or business life prior to entering the foreign service. One of the greatest advantages which American Consular officers have over foreign Consuls is that they have touched life at many points before entering the employment of the Government.

European Consular officers are trained for the service and make a career of it, but often the very fact that they are so trained isolates them and keeps them apart from their fellow countrymen, or rather from acquiring intimate and accurate knowledge of what those fellow countrymen are thinking and doing. The young man who begins to be a Consul at twenty or twenty-two years of age, and who steps from his college into a Consulate, may eventually be an official of great value to his country, but the chances are that he will be a long while in the making.

In this connection, consideration of the all-important ques-

tion of tenure or length of term for Consular officers suggests itself. In the well-established and highly organized Consular establishments appertaining to various European Governments, the Consul is in effect appointed for life. He is expected to serve for a long period—forty or fifty years, perhaps. Then he is retired on half or three-quarters pay. But, manifestly, this plan has its disadvantages, as well as its advantages. It is found that the tendency of life tenure is to make a man easily satisfied, to stifle ambition, and to bring about an accumulation of "dead timber" in the service.

American Consuls are said to be more alert, more observing, and more usefully industrious than many of their foreign colleagues. This is not merely my own assertion, but one that has been made many times in foreign trade journals and in national legislative assemblies at various European capitals. It may surprise many of the critics of our Consular Service to know that serious-minded foreign students of the subject often point to it as a model of efficiency, and that they never fail to proclaim the excellence of the reports written by American Consular officers.

The frequent changes in office bring to the service new men with new points of view, fresh enthusiasm and an insatiable desire for work. The best of them want to make so excellent a record in four years that the welfare of the service may seem imperatively to demand their retention; and this effect of the present system unfolds one of the most unfortunate and pathetic features of our service. It is much to be deplored, when a Consul has striven earnestly and well for a number of years and has given during that period the very best there is in him, losing no opportunity to make himself valuable to his country, that, without a single word of warning he should be, for political reasons, superseded by a new official. This little tragedy has occurred hundreds of times, but it is gratifying to state that during the last four years its enactment has conspicuously decreased.

Consuls should be kept in office as long as they render good service and are in every way satisfactory. If they serve the country well for forty years, they ought to be retired on half pay. But, whether they enter the service through the designation by the President, or through the medium of a competitive examination, the way for their prompt retirement for such

causes as inefficiency, dishonesty or carelessness should be made easy and kept unobstructed.

A system of promotion should be established; and officers who do not reach a specified grade by the time they have attained a certain age should be dropped from the service, as should all those whose efficiency record falls below a fixed standard of excellence. If some such plan as this could be adopted, a current of promotion could be maintained, and there would be a constant influx of fresh blood.

V.

There are hopeful indications from many sources that legislative action providing for important changes in our Consular Service will be shortly forthcoming. It is important, therefore, at this time, to understand correctly the main facts affecting our Consular Service, and to know something about actual conditions. It is agreed by those who have been studying the matter from points of vantage for many years, and with a knowledge of what is practicable and what is impracticable, and who understand the grave difficulties in the way of securing legislation calculated radically to change existing conditions and ultimately to take the Consular Service out of politics, that it is better and wiser to ask at the present time for what we may reasonably expect to obtain, instead of wasting energy and time in crying for the moon and demanding immediate, radical and revolutionary reorganization of the whole foreign service. Therefore, Senator Lodge's excellent bill has been revised from time to time, until now it asks but two vitally essential things, namely: the grading of the Consular Service, and the establishing of salaries to correspond with the various grades.

The grading of the Consular Service means the establishment of a number of classes, so that in future a man will be appointed to a grade or class, and not to a particular post, as is now the case. In the army a man is appointed to be a Second Lieutenant, not a Second Lieutenant at Fort Sheridan or at Fort Thomas. Hereafter, it is of the first importance that Consuls should be appointed to a class or grade, and that the President should have the power to assign them to any post of duty embraced within the grade to which they have been designated or commissioned. Also, the aim is to classify Consulates according

to their importance and compensation. There can be no real improvement in the Consular Service unless the President and Secretary of State be given the power to move Consuls about in order to use men where they can be employed to the best advantage. This is the second important point in the Lodge Bill.

I agree entirely in principle with the objects sought to be attained by the Lodge Bill, but I would like to see more liberal allowances made in the way of compensations than is provided for in the bill recently introduced by Senator Lodge. Should this bill become a law, the salaries provided by it would represent the Consul's sole source of official income, because all fees would be swept away, so far as the Consul is concerned, and turned over to the Government. The Consul's salary will be his only source of official income. It is a matter of the utmost difficulty to have official salaries increased; and, if the salaries of the Consuls are presently to be readjusted, it is probable that they will remain as fixed for at least a quarter of a century, and possibly longer. Many of the Consular salaries paid to-day were established in 1856, when the necessary expenses of living in Continental Europe were not more than one-third as great as they are at present.

The country can afford to pay its Consuls well, and public sentiment in the United States is heartily in favor of liberal treatment of Consular officers by the Government. The one hundred and twenty thousand Americans who visit Europe annually expect to find their Consular representative a man whose mode of living, whose ability, whose character and whose standing are such as to command the respect of the community in which he resides, and they have a right to expect that he will be a source of pride to his visiting fellow countrymen. The American who goes abroad wants his Consular representative to live in a manner in keeping with the dignity of the potent and opulent nation which he represents. Not only for these reasons can the Government afford to pay its Consular officers well, but it can afford the outlay, for the reason that the service is almost a self-sustaining one.

Last year the net cost of the Consular Service to the Government was only \$144,152. United States Consular officers collected and paid into the Treasury \$1,188,383. The difference between this sum and the cost of the maintenance of the Con-

sular Service was the figures first quoted. About a million dollars is collected annually by the United States Consular officers for authenticating invoices. The charge for this service is \$2 50. There is no reason why the fee for this service should not be increased. If it were \$3 50, the Consular Service would pay a large profit to the Government.

Probably a graduated scale of charges based upon the amount of the invoice to be authenticated should be established. This could be so arranged that it would be more just to foreign shippers than the present undeviating rate, and it might be made to augment the income of this Government to such an extent that the Consular salaries could be increased one hundred per cent. without adding a cent to our burden of taxation. At present, the foreign producer who sends a shipment of goods to the United States valued at \$200 pays just the same amount for having his invoices legalized as does the shipper who sends goods to the value of \$200,000.

Increasing the fee for legalizing invoices to such an extent that the salaries of Consuls could be doubled without increasing the burden upon the Treasury of the United States could be done without working hardship to any one, and probably it would evoke nothing more than a perfunctory protest from some of the foreigners who have large connections in this country.

In the matter of compensation, the Lodge Bill provides for two Consuls-General of the first class at \$12,000 a year; for six of the second class, at \$8,000 a year; for eight of the third class, at \$6,000 a year; for nine of the fourth class, at \$5,500 a year; for fourteen of the fifth class, at \$4,500 a year; for eight of the sixth class, at \$3,500 a year, and four of the seventh class at \$3,000 a year; and it also provides for the payment of Consuls by salaries ranging downward from one of the first class, at \$8,000 a year, to \$1,000 a year in the lowest class.

The salaries proposed for the Consuls-General and for the Consuls of the higher classes are not sufficient. As a plain business proposition, the men who fill these positions should be more liberally compensated. Let us consider an example. The Consul-General at Paris receives a salary of \$5,000 a year; the unofficial fees which he receives, being permitted by law to keep and appropriate to his own use, amount to \$9,000 or \$10,000 a year. If these fees are cut off and appropriated by the Government, it seems only

just that the Consular officer should receive a salary that would be a fair compensating equivalent. The duties of the Consuls-General at Paris and at London, Shanghai and Berlin are very onerous, their responsibilities grave and unintermittent. The Consuls-General at Paris and London might very well be paid \$15,000 a year. It is of the greatest importance to have high-class men; and men of ability and experience, who would be fully equal to the demands of these posts, ought not to be asked to serve abroad for a smaller compensation than \$15,000 a year.

The Consuls-General at Shanghai and Berlin should be paid at least \$12,000 a year. The post at Shanghai is more important to us commercially than any ten-thousand-dollar diplomatic mission which we maintain. The cost of living is very high and the demands upon the Consul-General are diverse and frequent. He has not only to be acquainted with Consular work, but to know about business, industrial and shipping matters, and, in addition to that, he must hold court and exercise judicial functions.

The Consuls-General of the second-class posts should not, in my opinion, receive less than \$10,000 a year, and there are ten posts the incumbents of which should be entitled to payment at this rate. The Consular officers at the following posts ought, I think, by reason of the quality and quantity of work which they are called upon to perform, receive \$10,000 a year; Havana, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Ayres, Valparaiso, Vienna, Rome, St. Petersburg (this office should be transferred to Moscow), Calcutta, Hongkong and Canton. Ten Consuls-General of the third class ought to be compensated at the rate of \$8,000 a year; fifteen of the fourth class, at \$5,500 a year; fourteen of the fifth class, at \$4,500 a year; not more than seven of the sixth class, at \$4,000 a year.

The Lodge Bill, as introduced, provided that no applicant under the age of twenty-one years, or over the age of forty-five years, shall be designated for appointment to the Consular Service. That was one of the wise provisions of a carefully considered measure, and one that will make for the good of the service.

It is not only desirable that the President should be empowered to move Consuls about, to respond to the highest need and welfare of the service, but he should also be authorized to summon them to Washington for service in this country from time to time. It is of the first importance

that our Consular officers should be thoroughly, vividly and vitally in touch with commercial life in this country. It often happens that a Consul at a particular post possesses a great deal of important and timely information about some current question, so that it would be much to the advantage of the Secretary of State to have him for a short time in Washington in order to consult with him. Under the present system, the Consul may not be called home for any purpose unless he chooses to come at his own expense.

The Government of the United States does not pay the travelling expenses of any of its officials in the foreign service. A man may be sent to a post seven thousand miles distant, the compensation of which does not exceed \$1,500 a year, but he is, nevertheless, compelled to pay all his expenses to and from the post. In every other Department of Government work, a man who travels upon official business is paid the necessary expenses. Why an exception has been made to the disadvantage of the underpaid foreign service, it is impossible to ascertain.

Not only is it most essential for the Department to send for Consuls to consult with them at various times, but it is highly advantageous for the Consul to spend a few weeks from time to time in Washington. He could, also, be used to very great advantage if he were allowed to spend three months in the United States, once in two or three years, for the purpose of lecturing before trade organizations upon practical questions connected with our foreign commerce, suggested to him by his own experience abroad.

At present, I believe, no Consul of the United States, commissioned by the President, is a foreigner. A large number of Vice-Consuls and a considerable number of Consular Agents are not American citizens. It is the policy of the Department of State, whenever it is practicable to do so, to substitute American citizens for foreigners who are filling the posts of Consular Agents. If Congress would make an appropriation for the payment of Vice-Consuls, then the Government could require all these officials to be Americans. Under the present system, the Consul has to pay the Vice-Consul from his own pocket, and in a majority of cases the pay is so small that an American could not afford to leave this country and go abroad for the sake of earning it.

There is now being developed in the Department of State a plan for arriving at some reasonable estimate of the efficiency of

each Consular officer. A system has been devised which will enable the Secretary of State to learn at a glance all that any formal record can show respecting a man's capacity, fitness, character and adaptability for his work and for the particular post he holds. This efficiency record is to be most carefully and systematically kept, and when it has been developed and improved by experience it will be one of the most useful instruments for the improvement of the service that have yet been devised.

In order to give additional value to the efficiency record which Secretary Root is striving so earnestly to create, it will be incumbent upon Congress to provide for the corps of Consular Inspectors, referred to, for it is not possible to arrive at a just and comprehensive estimate of the work, character and capacity of a Consular officer, if such estimate has to rest wholly upon the written records of his work and upon the perusal of his formal communications to the Department of State.

The efficiency of Consular officials cannot be fully and fairly determined through the medium of official reports, unless some substantial change in the organization of the system is authorized by Congress. There are at present about sixty Consuls-General in the service. It ought to be the duty of a Consul-General frequently to inspect Consular offices under his jurisdiction, and to make intelligent and discriminating reports concerning the conduct of every office he visits.

Under the present system the official connection between the Consuls-General and the Consular officers of lower grade is of a loose, perfunctory and formal character. Very often the Consul-General does not know the Consuls in his jurisdiction, and never visits them officially. One reason for this is that the Consuls-General in the larger cities, under the present organization, are so occupied with the duties of their own offices that they have little time for travel and inspection. Another reason is that there are no funds provided to enable them to do this much-needed work. The value of these visits, as the service is now organized, might in many cases be open to grave conjecture. It has frequently happened that men without any experience whatever are made Consuls-General, and it could hardly be expected that an official of this sort who does not know the rudiments of Consular bookkeeping would make a competent Inspector. When the service is properly organized, a man will not reach the grade

of Consul-General until he has served a good many years in a subordinate capacity, and when he is appointed Consul-General it will be fair to assume that he is fitted for that office.

The Lodge Bill has been reported to and passed by the Senate in an amended form. The most important of the amendments made by the Committee before reporting the bill to the Senate are those which strike out the sections providing for a system of promotion in the Consular Service, and the sections relating to the age of appointees, and their examination for admission to the service. It is earnestly to be hoped that when the House debates this bill the wisdom of restoring at least the former of these provisions will be demonstrated. There should be a carefully worked out and ordered plan of promotion. The clause placing limitations upon the age of appointees to the Consular Service should be restored to the Lodge Bill. The matter of examinations is not from a practical view so important a feature of the bill as the other points, for the reason that the President can continue to require every applicant to pass a satisfactory examination. This is an attribute of the power of appointment conferred upon him by the Constitution.

The Lodge Bill ought not to encounter serious opposition in the House of Representatives. The Hon. Robert Adams, of Pennsylvania, has been for many years an outspoken and tireless advocate of Consular reform, and as he is now second in rank on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs effective support for the cause will be expected of him.

It is not proposed at present to bring the Consular Corps within the scope of the Civil Service law, but merely to reorganize it upon lines which will make for greater permanence of tenure and vastly improved efficiency. If Congress will give to the President and Secretary of State power to grade the Consular Service, and to appoint men to a class or grade rather than to a particular post, and will, also, authorize the adjustment of salaries and make them adequate, and, furthermore, empower the President to shift men about from post to post, as the needs of the Service demand, it will be the most important, far-reaching, and substantial advance in respect to the improvement of the Consular Service that has ever been made, an advance from which there will be no retreat, and which will in itself be an unfailing and certain incentive to further and more radical changes for the better.

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